



Kingsley Plantation Exhibit Plan Newsletter

April 2004

Dear Friends,

There is a wonderful historic site within the Jacksonville area for you to enjoy. To help you learn about the interesting history of the Zephaniah Kingsley Plantation in the Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve, the National Park Service will be creating exhibits for the site. Details of these exhibits will be contained in an Exhibit Plan currently under development. This plan will determine what information is necessary and what delivery methods are most appropriate to enhance experiences at Kingsley Plantation. The planning team is gathering information to be considered in this planning process. The information will help define the basis from which decisions will be made. Your participation at this stage of the planning process is extremely important.

The accompanying newsletter describes the purpose and need for the Kingsley Plantation Exhibit Plan. It presents the mandates, purpose and significance of the Timucuan Preserve. It also identifies a preliminary list of goals, issues and exhibit concepts for the program at Kingsley Plantation to help visitors understand and connect with the site and its history. This is where you come in. Please review the legislated mandates, purpose and significance and then provide your comments on the initial list of goals, issues and exhibit concepts. This is your opportunity to ensure that the planning team considers your point-of-view regarding the visitor experience at Kingsley Plantation.

Enclosed in this newsletter is a response form for your comments. You may return it at either the Kingsley Plantation or Fort Caroline National Memorial Visitor Centers or just drop it in the mail. This document and more details about the draft exhibit concepts are also available on the Timucuan Preserve website at: www.nps.gov/timu. You are cordially invited to our open house where you can meet with the planning team to discuss your comments, questions and concerns relevant to the exhibit planning. The open houses will be held:

Wednesday, May 12, 2004
7:00-9:00 pm
Amelia Island Museum of
History
233 South Third Street
Fernandina Beach, FL 32034

Wednesday, May 19, 2004
7:00- 9:00 pm
Henrietta's
9th and Main
1850 N. Main Street
Jacksonville, FL 32206

Saturday, May 22, 2004
1:00- 3:00 pm
Ribault Clubhouse
Fort George Road
Fort George Island
Jacksonville, FL 32226

All comments are due by May 28, 2004. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Barbara Goodman
Superintendent
Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve



The Kingsley Plantation Exhibit Plan

Timucuan Preserve
National Park Service
Department of the Interior



WHAT ARE WE DOING?

The National Park Service (NPS) is developing an Exhibit Plan for the Zephaniah Kingsley Plantation in the Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve. This plan will determine what information is necessary to make a visit to Kingsley Plantation more memorable and meaningful for visitors. This plan will determine how to answer questions and provide information about the plantation in a way that is harmonious with the historic buildings and landscape. This plan is developed with public input. It must also comply with applicable laws and policies and be consistent with management philosophies found in existing higher-level plans such as the General Management Plan (GMP) for the preserve.



WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

The National Park Service Organic Act of 1916 established as the fundamental purpose of national parks *“to conserve the scenery, and the natural and historic objects and wildlife therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them*

unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.” In 1988, when Congress established the Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve, the Zephaniah Kingsley Plantation was specifically named as one of several significant historic sites to be protected by the National Park Service under its guiding purpose.

The purpose of the interpretive and educational program at the Timucuan Preserve is to make visitors more aware of its cultural and natural treasures and encourage support for protecting these valuable resources. It is a step towards accomplishing our mission. Part of the interpretive and education program at Kingsley Plantation will be the exhibits being considered now.

HOW DOES THIS AFFECT ME?

There are many things to see and do in the Timucuan Preserve. The National Park Service uses the term “visitor experience” to describe what people do, see and learn while visiting the park. Ranger programs, exhibits, and recreational activities are three common aspects of the visitor experience. Exhibits and self-guided walks are two visitor activities being developed for Kingsley Plantation to expand what visitors can do, see, and learn.



This exhibit plan will address what information will be provided to visitors at Kingsley Plantation and how and where this information will be provided. For you, the most obvious change to the site and for your visit will be on the grounds where outdoor exhibits are

proposed and in the historic buildings where the existing exhibits will be replaced. The new exhibits will contain a mix of text, graphics and audio elements. The placement of these exhibits may affect the views of the historic buildings and grounds.

Less obvious is the information that will be provided to you through these exhibits. The goal for the exhibits is to help you understand the history of the people who lived at Zephaniah Kingsley Plantation. There are many stories to tell and many ways to tell them. Your input is important to help us decide the best way to relate the history of Kingsley Plantation.

WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW?

The National Park Service established a planning team that consists of the Superintendent, park staff, NPS Exhibit Center specialists and HaleySharp Design consultants. This team met with local scholars and community stakeholders to exchange ideas about what information to convey and how to convey it at Kingsley Plantation. Many of these ideas were used to develop the concepts presented here. Your input is needed now to make sure the exhibits help visitors understand the Kingsley Plantation history and enjoy their visit to the site.



WHAT'S NEXT?

You are invited to comment on the ideas and concepts presented here as well as give us any new ideas and concepts you may have. After the concepts are fully developed with your comments, a draft final plan will be developed that identifies both the stories to be interpreted

at Kingsley Plantation and the exhibit designs that enhance visitor understanding. You will be invited to comment on the draft final plan. The park will then seek funding to produce the exhibits which will be installed at Kingsley Plantation.



HOW CAN YOU BECOME INVOLVED?

You can help the National Park Service by getting involved in the process. Your input at this time will help develop a plan that is responsive to the needs and desires of park management and the visiting public. You are encouraged to review this document to better understand the goals and constraints of this project and to offer comments on the direction we are taking with our interpretive program. To make this process work fully we need your comments, feedback and participation in the upcoming scoping meetings.

You can send us your comments and/or suggestions via email to timu_superintendent@nps.gov or by regular mail to the Superintendent, Timucuan Preserve, 13165 Mt. Pleasant Rd., Jacksonville, FL 32225. You may also drop your comments by the Fort Caroline National Memorial or Kingsley Plantation visitor centers. Please respond by May 28, 2004. You can also join our mailing list to receive future newsletters or relevant information providing updates on the planning process.

Exhibit Plan Concepts - Exhibits

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The Exhibit Plan will depict proposed locations for exhibits and visitor flow throughout the site. Themes will be developed appropriate to each interpretive point. Exhibits on the grounds may include display panels, kiosks, sculptures or artifacts.



Exhibits for interior areas will be designed to have the least impact on the historic structures. Access to some of the interior rooms will be restricted to protect these more fragile areas.



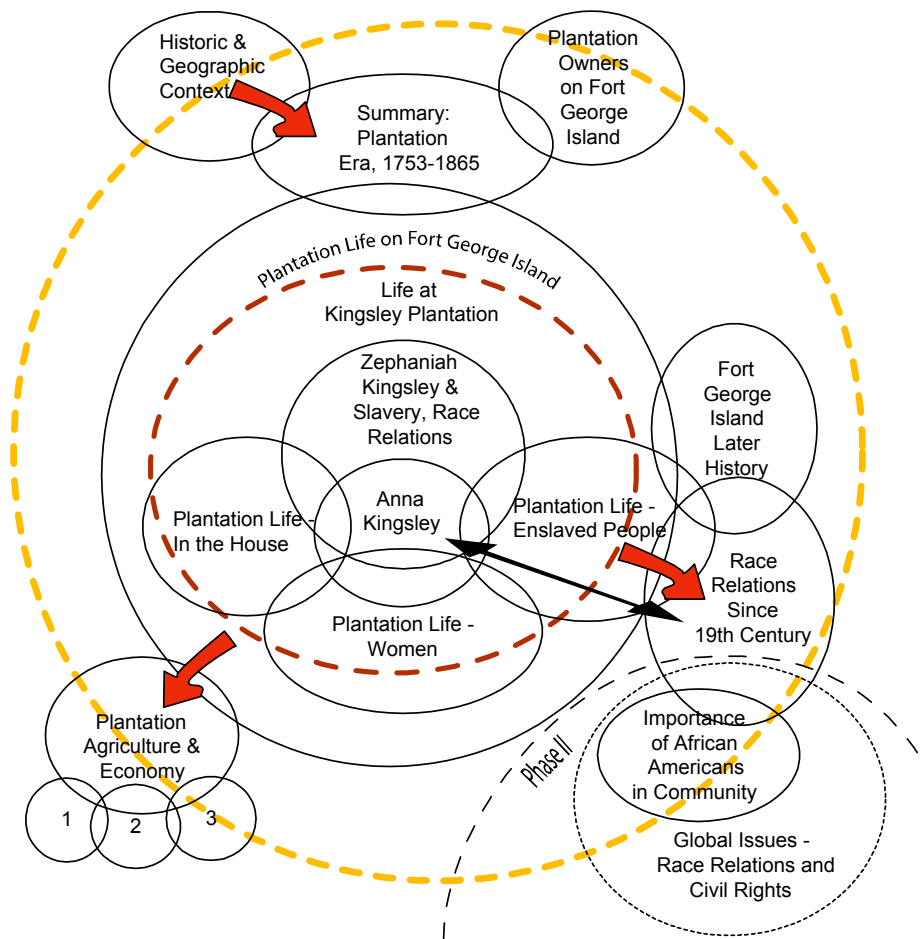
Other signage proposed for the site may include signposts to provide orientation and direction to features at the sight. Orientation signs may also be located at entry points to provide site identity, directions to facilities and visitor services.

Large signs may be located outside the historic site with emphasis on providing information to visitors in vehicles. Small signs within the historic site would be designed with emphasis on providing information to visitors on foot.



An audio tour system may be used to deliver the interpretive message to visitors. These systems have become a popular method for interpreting sensitive sights where conventional exhibit media could be intrusive or conflict with the protection of historic resources.





The following themes and topics are being proposed. The figure above diagrams their relationships and emphases.

- Historic and geographic context
- The Plantation Era
- Plantation owners on Fort George Island (before and after Zephaniah Kingsley)
- Plantation Life on Fort George Island
 - Life at Kingsley Plantation
 - ◆ Plantation life in the house
 - ◆ Plantation life for women
 - ◆ Plantation life for enslaved people
 - Anna Kingsley (and Kingsley children, family and descendants)
 - Zephaniah Kingsley, slavery and race relations
 - Plantation agriculture and economy (with sub-themes)
- Fort George Island: later history
- Race relations since 19th century
- Importance of African Americans in [NE Florida] community
- Global issues: race relations, oppression, discrimination etc.

Preserve Significance and Goals

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National Park Service
Department of the Interior



PRESERVE PURPOSE – Why the Preserve exists.

The Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve was established by Congress with the passage of Public Law 100-249, on February 16, 1988. The purposes of the preserve are to protect and interpret the wetlands and related uplands as a healthy, functioning estuarine system; protect and interpret significant historic and prehistoric sites; contribute to the protection, preservation, and management of the Nassau/St. Johns River basin; and commemorate the historic La Caroline settlement of Fort Caroline.

PRESERVE SIGNIFICANCE – Why the Preserve is special.

The preserve encompasses approximately 46,000 acres of an extensive estuarine system at the mouth of the St. Johns and Nassau/St. Mary's Rivers where they meet the Atlantic Ocean. The preserve is located entirely within the City of Jacksonville, Duval County, Florida. It provides a large open area of waterways and uplands for recreational opportunities within the boundaries of a major metropolitan area.

The preserve is rich in prehistoric and historic sites and represents a 6,000-year continuum of human habitation. The most significant of these sites were specifically named in the enabling legislation. The Zephaniah Kingsley Plantation with its eighteenth and nineteenth century buildings is one of these significant sites.

Zephaniah Kingsley Plantation



The main house (plantation house) was built in 1798 by John McQueen, owner of Fort George Island in the years after Florida reverted from British to Spanish governance. He and subsequent owners employed enslaved people, most of whom arrived originally in the slave trade between Africa, Europe, the Caribbean and America. The slave system in Northeast Florida differed from that in other parts of the Americas. The cabins and outbuildings at Kingsley Plantation reflect what life was like for the people who were enslaved here in the 18th and 19th centuries.

The plantation is now named for Zephaniah Kingsley, who lived here between 1814 and 1837. His approach to plantation management and what we would now call race relations, the life of his wife Anna (the Wolof Senegalese Anta Majigeen Njaay) and of their children and family relatives, are stories with modern relevance that can be told positively and powerfully here in the environment in which the events took place.

MISSION GOALS – Why are we planning?

Consistent with the mission of the National Park Service, the Kingsley Plantation Exhibit Plan will seek to enhance the following goals:

- Natural and cultural resources and associated values are protected, restored, and maintained in good condition and managed within their broader ecosystems and cultural contexts.
- The NPS contributes to knowledge about natural and cultural resources and associated values, and management decisions about resources and visitors are based on adequate scholarly and scientific information.
- Visitors understand, appreciate, and are inspired by the preserve's historical and natural resources, and they support the protection of these resources.

- Available preserve facilities, infrastructure, and services are sufficient to support operational needs, staff, and visitors.



INTERPRETIVE GOALS

The following goals were developed specifically to guide the Kingsley Plantation Exhibit Plan:

- To create an awareness of the atmosphere and life at Kingsley Plantation, especially around the years 1814- 1839, as a specific ‘sense of time and place’ experience and as an example of Northeast Florida Sea Island plantation history.
- To enhance understanding of plantation economy and its dependence on the use of enslaved people.
- To enhance understanding of the status of enslaved peoples in Florida, and at Kingsley Plantation.
- To create an awareness of the personalities and legacies of the main characters in the Kingsley Plantation story, especially Zephaniah Kingsley and Anta Majigeen.
- To provide information about the roles of people, particularly owners, managers, enslaved people and women, in plantation economy.
- To enhance knowledge of the crops and other products of the plantation.



ISSUES TO CONSIDER

- The Kingsley Plantation site is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Exhibits designed for Kingsley Plantation must comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended.
- The main plantation house was recently closed as the result of a structural evaluation. The house’s structural integrity may limit the types of use and determine whether exhibits are appropriate in the structure. In other structures access to utilities may be limited or unavailable.
- The historic landscape is an integral component of the historic district. Alterations to this landscape including exhibits have the potential to adversely affect the landscape.
- Kingsley Plantation is a significant and important place for Floridians and Americans of all cultural backgrounds. In addition to the stories connected directly with Kingsley Plantation there may be a desire to address wider issues. However, the current plan must identify those stories that can be delivered under existing circumstances and within the scope and budget authorized by Congress.

Timucuan Preserve – Kingsley Plantation Exhibit Plan Newsletter
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